

#### AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include amendments to Fig. 9. Character 105 is replacing character 104 for the second (lower) supply roll. The characters now correspond to the description in the specification. Character 131 is replacing character 130 which designates the nip corresponding to incremental stretching system 132. A formal replacement sheet 5 with the corrected characters for Fig. 9 is included.

The formal drawings have been submitted. The photographs for Figs. 8, 17A, and 17B are no longer mostly black.

All changes to the specification were made in the previous response. The previous response amended the description of Fig. 10 to describe reference character 102 and to reference nip 131.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (12)  
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes (1)

## REMARKS

Claims 1, 10-14 are pending in the present application. No additional claims fee is believed to be due.

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to correct the grammatically awkward language and to more specifically define the invention.

New Claims 11 -14 have been added. Antecedent basis is found on page 4, lines 19-22 and page 9, lines 22-23.

## Drawings

Applicants are submitting corrected formal drawings showing a change to Fig. 10 and new copies of the photographs shown in Figs. 8, 17A and 17B. Applicants believe the formal drawings to be consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) and M.P.E.P. §608.02(r).

## Rejection Under 35 USC 103

The Examiner has rejected Claim 1 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Palumbo (WO 96/10979) and Claims 1-10 as being unpatentable over Benson, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,628,097). To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. Applicants submit that Palumbo and Benson do not meet this requirement.

Palumbo discloses a covering structure for covering an absorbent body of an absorbent sanitary article. The structure comprises an upper and lower layer of a non-woven fibrous material and an intermediate layer comprising an elastic film. (Page 3) Benson discloses a method for aperturing a nonwoven web (abstract). Benson discloses that the nonwoven web may be a laminate or a single layer. Benson provides a three layer example in which the outer layers are spunbond and the central layer is a meltblown (column 7, lines 26-42).

Neither Palumbo nor Benson teach or suggest the use of laminate webs in articles such as flexible carrying implement, medical application, kitchen or bathroom implement, decorative covering, home accent item, pet industry article, fabric or fabric backing, and bedding. It is common to use nonwoven laminate in the disposable absorbent articles such as sanitary pad and diapers. However, it is not common to use nonwoven laminate webs in the article claimed in the present invention.

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As amended, Claims 1 and 10 require that the third material not be a meltblown or elastic and Claims 12 and 14 require that the material not be thermoplastic. The articles claimed in the present invention have very different uses than the articles and uses described in Benson and Palumbo. Claims 11 and 13 require the laminate webs to have different regions. Neither Benson nor Palumbo teach or suggest the laminate having different regions. Therefore one having ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to develop the present invention based on the disclosures of Benson and Palumbo.

#### Conclusion

In light of the above remarks, it is requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections. Early and favorable action in the case is respectfully requested.

Applicants have made an earnest effort to place their application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as now claimed from the applied references. In view of the foregoing,

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, entry of the amendments presented herein, and allowance of Claims 1 and 10 - 14.

Respectfully submitted,

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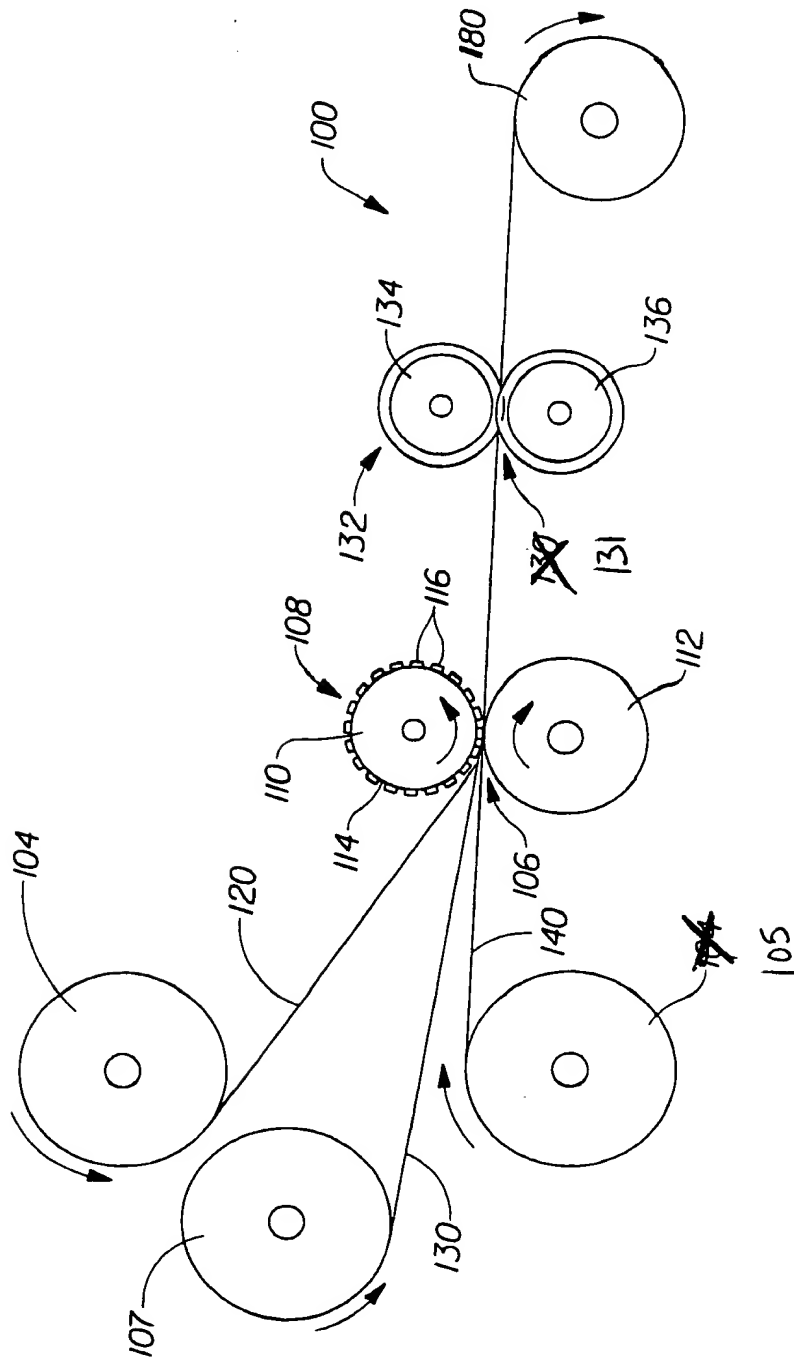


Fig. 9